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DEPT FOR DRL, INL, AND EUR/SCE, NSC FOR BRAUN, USUN FOR
DREW SCHUFLETOWSKI, USOSCE FOR STEVE STEGER

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [KCRM](#) [EAID](#) [KDEM](#) [UNMIK](#) [YI](#)

SUBJECT: KOSOVO: ANOTHER PRIORITY STANDARD FULFILLED

REF: A. PRISTINA 56

[1](#)B. PRISTINA 163

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On April 4, Kosovo's Provisional Institutions of Self-Government approved a report requested by Prime Minister Agim Ceku evaluating the costs to repair 23 commercial properties (18 owned by Serbs or other minorities and 5 owned by Albanians) damaged during the March 2004 anti-Serb violence. This fully completes another of the Contact Group's 13 Priorities for Kosovo Standards Implementation. In our view, only the two standards related to the Kosovo Property Agency's rental scheme and implementation of Kosovo Property Agency decisions remain incomplete. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) The PISG decided April 4 to set aside 41,766 euros to compensate owners of 23 commercial properties throughout Kosovo damaged by rioters during the March 2004 violence. Eighteen of the properties were owned by Serbs or other minorities, while the remaining five were owned by Albanians, including a hotel in Suva Reka damaged by rampaging Albanians for which the owner is set to receive 5,400 euros, one of the largest payouts.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Charge of the British Office in Pristina agrees with us that by identifying funds from the reserve account at the Ministry of Economy and Finance and by issuing an instruction for payment, the PISG has now completed the second part of the Contact Group's priority standard dealing with reconstruction of certain properties damaged during the March 2004 violence. Local CG representatives agreed on January 19 that the PISG has completed the first part of this priority, reconstruction of Serbs houses in the village of Svinjare in southern Mitrovica.

[1](#)4. (SBU) COMMENT: We have raised the reconstruction of these commercial properties or the compensation of their owners for several months and welcome the government's decision. We have reviewed the government's evaluation and believe it represents a good estimate of the actual costs to repair the damages to these mostly small storefront shops. With this action, the Kosovo government has completed eleven

of the Contact Group's 13 Priorities for Standards Implementation, including, in our estimation, the standard dealing with prosecutions for perpetrators of the March 2004 riots (a judgment shared by CG members other than the Russians, who continue to believe that high-level political figures were responsible for the riots and should be identified and prosecuted). What remains to complete the priority standards is to expand the rental property scheme run by the Kosovo Property Agency to all properties in which people other than the owners reside, and to implement fully all administrative decisions of the KPA awarding property rights ownership. END COMMENT.

15. (SBU) U.S. Office Pristina clears this cable in its entirety for release to U.N. Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. K Aidanow